

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1-21 are pending, in which claims 5 and 15 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, claims 1, 11, and 19 are currently amended, and claim 21 is newly presented. No new matter is introduced.

The Office Action mailed October 14, 2005 rejected claims 1, 2, 4-8, 11-15, and 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious based on *Satoh et al.* (US 6,179,726 B1) in view of *Anderson et al.* (US 5,255,918) and *Helmstetter et al.* (US 6,565,452 B2), claims 3 and 16 as obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on *Satoh et al.* in view of *Anderson et al.*, *Helmstetter et al.*, and further in view of *O'Doherty et al.* (US 6,383,090 B1), and claims 9 and 10 as obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on *Satoh et al.* in view of *Anderson et al.*, *Helmstetter et al.*, *O'Doherty et al.*, and further in view of *Campau* (US 4,398,965).

As an initial matter, the Office Action (on page 2) appears to have inadvertently omitted claim 6 from the statement of the rejection.

Regarding the objection to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a), Applicants respectfully traverse the objection as the claimed feature (claim 7) of a “plate-like face body arranged to extend over the entire width of said head body in a vertical direction” is clearly illustrated in Fig. 4. More specifically, the amended Specification states, “[i]n a further different embodiment shown in Fig. 4, the plate-like face body 12 is formed and sized so as to extend over substantially the entire vertical width of the head body 10.” (page 10, lines 21-24). As such, three peripheries of head body 10 are coterminous with three peripheries of the plate-like face body 12. Thus, label 12 and the uncommon periphery 12H located toward the heel of the head body adequately illustrate the particular embodiment recited within dependent claim 7 as required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

To advance prosecution, Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 11, and 19. Amended claim 1 now recites “said second periphery being positioned in a specified position wherein a golf ball is prevented from coming into direct contact with said second periphery even when said golf ball is in contact with both a surface of said hosel part and a surface of said plate-like face body apart from said second periphery simultaneously.” Amended claim 11 recites “wherein said periphery is positioned such that a golf ball is prevented from contacting said periphery when a golf ball is in contact with both a surface of said hosel part and a surface of said plate-like face body.” Independent claim 19, as amended, recites “wherein one periphery of the plate-like face body is positioned such that a golf ball is prevented from contacting the one periphery when the golf ball is in contact with both a surface of the hosel part and a surface of the plate-like face body.”

The above features are clearly supported by the Specification. For example, the Specification, on page 9, lines 21-28 and Figs. 2-3, discloses a void between golf ball GB and the end face 12HF containing the protected periphery 12H. This configuration enables the welded portion from being damaged when the iron head conducts shots on the golf ball. These features are absent from the applied art.

Dissimilarly, *Sato et al.* discloses (per the Abstract) a plurality of iron golf clubs having respective club numbers different from each other. Sole widths of the iron golf clubs become gradually larger from No. 7 iron club toward a lower lofted iron club having the smaller loft angle than that of the No. 7 iron club and a higher lofted iron club having the larger loft angle than that of the No. 7 iron club. The sole widths of No. 5 iron club and iron golf clubs having the smaller loft angle than that of the No. 5 iron club are larger than the sole width of a sand wedge. While the reference does focus attention to sole widths of various iron clubs, (col. 3, line 42 – col. 4, line 30), as well as shaft configuration, (col. 4, line 31 – col. 5, line 9), and ribbing behind

the face plate of the club head, (col. 5, line 10 – col. 7, line 15), the reference is silent as to the positioning of the peripheries of the face plate, much less in the manner claimed.

The secondary references of *Anderson et al.*, *Helmstetter et al.*, *O'Doherty et al.*, and *Campau* do not cure the deficiencies of *Satoh et al.* *Anderson et al.* discloses a predefined periphery of a designated face plate, whereby due to the planar construction of the metallic club head, see Figs. 1 and 5, each corresponding periphery/weld extending along stretches 24-27 are exposed to contact when the club head strikes a golf ball. Likewise, *Helmstetter et al.* uses a substantially planar construction, see Figs. 1 and 8A, in which the peripheries 49 bounding face plate 72 are exposed to contact when the club head strikes a golf ball. *O'Doherty et al.* focuses attention on “the inclusion in a hollow golf club head of a reinforcement or secondary wall” (col. 1, lines 4-7); the drawings illustrate a unitary construction, see Fig. 3, in which a periphery is not established. Finally, *Campau* is directed to “an iron [golf club] in which the club head is provided with a slot behind the striking face of the club head to provide a flexible and resilient plate for striking the ball.” (col. 1, lines 17-20). While the *Campau* reference discloses that “the face plate 15, the weld deposits 20 and the remainder of the club head provide a flush striking surface for the ball as shown in Fig. 3.” (col. 4, lines 26-28; Fig. 2-4).

Therefore, a *prima facie* of obviousness thus has not been established. To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all of the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the obviousness rejections, and the indication that claims 1-4, 6-14, and 17-20 are allowable.

Turning now to newly added claim 21, this dependent claim recites “wherein a through-hole within a back part of the head body extends into the cavity portion.” New claim 19 depends from amended independent claim 19, and thus, should be allowable at least for the reasons put

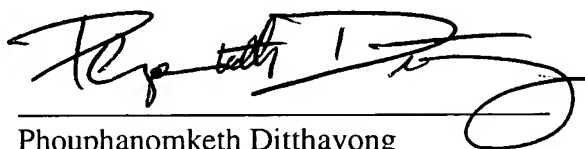
forth for the allowability of claim 19. Further, claim 19 is allowable on its own merits; namely, this feature is absent from the applied art.

Therefore, the present application, as amended, overcomes the objections and rejections of record and is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested. If any unresolved issues remain, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned attorney at (703) 425-8508 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

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1/9/06
Date



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